

THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES

Advisers to the Nation on Science, Engineering, and Medicine

Board on Chemical Sciences and Technology

Washington, DC

Dear Colleagues,

The Board on Chemical Sciences and Technology is pleased to announce a new consensus project being sponsored by the US Department of Transportation, “Effects of Diluted Bitumen on the Environment: A Comparative Study” and **to seek nominations for members of the study committee. Nominations are requested no later than Friday, August 29.** We invite you to follow the progress of the study at our website, <http://dels.nas.edu/dilbit>. *(Please feel free to forward to interested parties and our apologies for any duplicates you may receive, as we are sending this to multiple lists).*

Charge to the Committee

Under the oversight of the National Research Council’s Board on Chemical Sciences and Technology, an ad-hoc committee will analyze whether the relevant properties of diluted bitumen differ sufficiently from those of other crude oils commonly transported in US transmission pipelines to warrant modifications of the regulations governing spill response plans, spill preparedness, and/or cleanup. The committee will examine the state of knowledge of the transport, fate, and effects of diluted bitumen once spilled into the environment (onshore and offshore) and identify the pertinent properties and characteristics that influence the transport, fate and effects of diluted bitumen in the environment. The committee is expected to meet one time in calendar year 2014 and 3 times in calendar year 2015. The full statement of task is appended.

Expertise Needed

A committee of approximately 14 experts from chemical and engineering disciplines will be appointed by the National Research Council (NRC), drawing members from the academic, industrial sectors, and national lab sectors. Expertise on the committee will include the following areas: Pipeline operations and spill response in an event of a spill, pipeline spill and cleanup regulations, chemical engineering, chemistry, petroleum engineering, weathering effects, specialist in biodegradation of oil, and fate and effects of diluted bitumen in the environment.

To make a nomination, send us the person’s name, affiliation, contact information, area of expertise, and a brief statement on why the person is relevant to the study topic. Direct your ideas to dilbit@nas.edu. **Please submit your nominations NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, August 29, 2014.**

Having the appropriate membership is central to the success of every National Academies activity, so we appreciate your help in this committee nominations process. Please keep in mind, however, that it is not uncommon to receive 100 or more nominations for a slate of ~14 candidates and the final decision about committee membership rests with the Chair of the National Research Council. In developing a slate, care is given to ensuring that the committee includes appropriate expertise and is balanced and free from conflicts of interest.

Many thanks,
Douglas Friedman
Study Director
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Effects of Diluted Bitumen on the Environment: A Comparative Study

Statement of Task

An *ad hoc* committee will analyze whether the properties of diluted bitumen differ sufficiently from those of other crude oils commonly transported in U.S. transmission pipelines to warrant modifications of the regulations governing spill response plans, spill preparedness, or clean up.

The committee will:

1. Review the available literature and data, including any available data from oil spill responses or clean up, to determine the current state of knowledge of the transport, fate, and effects of diluted bitumen once spilled into the environment (onshore and offshore);
2. Identify the relevant properties and characteristics that influence the transport, fate and effects of commonly transported crude oils, including diluted bitumen, in the environment;
3. Make a comparison of the relevant properties identified in item (2) between diluted bitumen and a representative set of crude oils that are commonly transported via pipeline;
4. Based on the comparison in item 3, analyze and make a determination as to whether the differences between the environmental properties of diluted bitumen and those of other crude oils warrant modifications to the regulations governing spill response plans, spill preparedness, or clean up.

If the committee finds that there is not sufficient information to make a comparison of the environmental properties between diluted bitumen and other crude oils, the committee may make recommendations as to the additional data that would be needed to make such a determination.